Presbyterian church in Canada.
Report of French Mission scheme.
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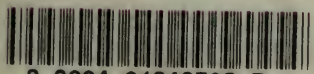
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REPORT OF THE FRENCH MISSION SCHEME.

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 23RD MAY, 1866.

To the Reverend the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland.

The Committee for Managing the French Mission Scheme report as follows:—

In the early part of the year the Committee, in common with the Church generally, was called to mourn the loss by death of its Vice Convener the late Rev. William Darrach, who during his residence in Montreal had taken a deep and active interest in our French Mission. The Rev. Joshua Fraser was thereupon appointed to succeed Mr. Darrach as Vice-Convener of the Committee.

In the Report submitted to the Synod at its last meeting, the Committee stated its conviction that in regard to the Mission in Montreal some new arrangement for the pastorate of our congregation in Dorchester Street should be made during the year then commencing, and their purpose immediately to turn their attention and efforts to this matter.

The Committee, through its Convener, has at length succeeded in redeeming this pledge. Correspondence with both the United States and France, prosecuted with the view of securing the services of a suitable Missionary for Montreal—led to the introduction to the Committee of the Rev. J. Goepp, B.D., of Strasbourg, France. This introduction ended in the appointment of this gentleman as your Missionary for one year at a salary of $800, and he has already entered upon his difficult work. Mr. Goepp was employed, for a few years, as a Missionary in France amongst a population chiefly Roman Catholic; and the Committee have hoped that the experience which he thus acquired in his native country, will be turned to good account in Canada. Mr. Goepp comes to us with the highest testimonials, both literary and moral, from the Reformed Church of France, of which he is a Minister, as well as from *La Société Centrale Protestante d'Evangélisation*, Paris.

Up to the time of Mr. Goepp's arrival in Montreal the public services in the Dorchester Street Church were sustained for the greater part of the year by the faithfulness and self-denial of the Messieurs Doudiet father and son. During several weeks towards the close of the year the health of our old and respected Missionary the Rev. J. E. Tanner was so

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far improved as to enable him to undertake one service on each Lord's day much to the gratification of the little band of Christians by whom he has been so long surrounded and loved. But it appeared to the Committee that the circumstances of the Mission demanded the full service of a vigorous and laborious Missionary, and such all along has been the expressed conviction of Mr. Tanner himself. The Committee, and as they believe the whole Church would rejoice over such a restoration of Mr. Tanner's health as should enable him yet to labour for the evangelization of the French people of Eastern Canada in some other field.

Mlle. Vernier has, during the year, faithfully and earnestly laboured, as heretofore, in the work of female instruction. An attendance of about fifteen French girls has been secured, and the homes of these pupils have been systematically visited.

Rev. L. Baridon gives an interesting report of his labours during the year.

He reports the work as one of difficulty, requiring faith and perseverance. Traditional religion, traditional ignorance, and traditional habits have to be contended against. God's grace alone, he says, can remove these evils.

There are five places which have had the benefit of Mr. Baridon's ministrations, viz.; Sciota, in the parish of St. Anthony, Champlain and Perry's Mill, in Champlain parish, Centreville, in Moer's parish, and Moer's village. In Sciota regular services were held once in three weeks. Owing to many persons having removed from the district, the number of Protestants has not increased during the year, but about twenty-five or thirty people attend the services. In the summer season the Sabbath-school taught by some American gentlemen is attended by about thirty young people. There is not so much zeal amongst the people of Sciota as might have been expected. Many who have seen the errors of Rome think that they have done all that is required of them by becoming Protestants. But there is a small number who love the Lord, and who are always ready to do all that they can for the welfare of the people. An incident is mentioned of a young Catholic lady to whom Mr. Baridon had frequently spoken of the love of Jesus, and who afterwards died, as he believes, in peace. Another Catholic family is mentioned, the mother of which had been much influenced through a funeral service, and had since, several times, allowed meetings to be held at her house.

In Champlain and Perry's Mill villages and vicinity, there are ten or twelve French Protestant families. Many of them are very respectable people. No regular meetings are held; but Mr. Baridon visits them, reads and prays with them, and occasionally holds meetings, as opportunity offers.

In Centreville, service is held once in three weeks. There are two places of meeting, three miles distant from each other. There are thirty people connected with these meetings, determined Protestants, who have forever left the Church of Romè. Besides these, there are many others still unenlightened, who are seeking for the truth. Four persons are mentioned who have been brought under the influence of the gospel, and meetings have been held in their houses. The last time the Lord's Supper was administered, seven new communicants partook of it. Mr. Baridon has good hopes for the future of that station.

In Moers village there have been no regular meetings. The families residing there, and in the vicinity, have been frequently visited by Mr. Baridon and his wife.

Mr. Baridon's field being a scattered one, extending over a considerable area, he reports that it is not easy to determine the full extent of the good which has been done through his instrumentality. Many weak souls had been strengthened; many had got more light, and had been brought to enquire for themselves concerning the high question of salvation or eternal damnation. But Mr. Baridon is mortified when he reflects that little has been done in comparison with what there remains to do. He concludes as follows :—

"So far as I am able to judge, this work of your Missionary Society in this vicinity is a good one. It has hitherto been carried on with but little material. It has simply consisted in endeavouring to evangelize unbelievers at your own door, and no person, with love for God and his neighbour, will deny that it is a work of humanity, and approved of God. To preach the gospel to the unlearned and ignorant, in order to bring them to a knowledge of the only living and true God, appears to me worthy of God and men. Roman Catholics living in these localities are generally accessible. There are exceptions, however, owing to the influence of the priests, who sometimes preach against the Protestants. During the year I performed several baptisms and marriage ceremonies, and many funeral services. I cannot state exactly the number of Protestant people with whom I am more or less intimately connected in my ministry. I suppose it to be about two hundred, more or less.'

This interesting report, the Committee is persuaded will be received with gratitude by the Synod.

Much to their regret the smallness of the receipts into the Treasury obliged the Committee to notify this excellent missionary that his engagement must cease at the end of the Synodical year. It may be added that it will be utterly impossible to renew this engagement which the Committee is very anxious to do, unless the congregations throughout the Synod manifest a greater practical interest in this important work.

By the Treasurer's report it will be seen that only thirty-one congregations have remitted collections during the year against sixty-one that contributed last year. The total amount received from these congregations and from special donations reaches $617.88 against $815.18 received last year. It need not surprise the Synod therefore that there should be due to the Treasurer a balance of $90.99.

The Committee does not doubt that the new responsibilities which it has undertaken will be met by the Church with new liberality, and that the coming year will be marked by new interest in the mission throughout our congregations. Either this must be the case, or the work to which the Church put its hand so many years ago and which it has with greater or less success endeavoured ever since to prosecute must be abandoned.

One source of encouragement the Committee cannot forbear to mention, viz., the activity and success of the Ladies' Auxiliary Society of Montreal, which has not only contributed a special donation of $100 towards the salary of Mr. Goepp, but also $290 towards the general purposes of the Montreal mission. This latter sum does not appear in the Treasurer's report. The Committee would respectfully suggest the formation in other cities, as well as in the towns and villages generally of similar auxiliaries.

FRENCH MISSION FUND.

Congregational Collections.

Point St. Charles, Montreal, per Rev. Wm. Darrach	$4 00
Bayfield, Rev. H. Gibson	3 00
Oxford, Rev. W. T. Canning	0 25
Chatham, C. W., Rev. J. Rannie	10 00
Litchfield, Rev. D. McDonald	4 50
Cornwall, Rev. H. Urquhart, D.D.	16 00
St. Paul's Church, Montreal, Rev. John Jenkins, D.D.	134 70
West King, Rev. J. Carmichael	8 00
Ormstown, Rev. H. C. Clarke	11 60
Martintown, Rev. J. Muir	7 00
Ross and Westmeath, Rev. H. Cameron	5 00
Williamstown, Rev. P. Watson	12 60
McNab and Horton, Rev. G. Thompson	9 00
Ottawa, Rev. Alex. Spence, D.D.	35 00
Beckwith, Rev. H. Ross	4 00
Clarke, Rev. J. P. Mullin	5 50
Buckingham and Cumberland, Rev. J. C. Smith	14 40
Mulmer and Tossorontio, Rev. A. Maclennan	5 00
Perth, Rev. W. Bain	61 44
Whitby, Rev. K. Maclennan	5 00
Fergus, Rev. A. Macdonnell	12 60
Lachine, Rev. W. Simpson	16 00
Middleville, Rev. D. J. McLean	4 00
Brockville, Rev. D. Morrison	12 50
Chelsea, Rev. J. Severeight	5 60
Packingham, Rev. A. Mann	5 00
Melbourne, Rev. T. G. Smith	34 77
Lancaster, Rev. T. McPherson	6 00
Wolf Island, Rev. G. Porteous	6 00
New Market, Rev. J. Brown	4 00
Valcartier, Rev. D. Shank	4 00
	$466 66

Donations.

Received from Missionary Association per Rev. W. Bain, Perth		$15 82
" Collection by Rev. Alex. Spence, D.D., paid in Synod		15 00
" From Ladies' Association St. Andrew's Church, Fergus		7 40
" Collected Sabbath School, Ross, per Rev. H. Cameron	5 00	
" " " " Westmeath, per "	5 00	
		10 00
" " St. Andrew's Church Sabbath School, Clifton, per Rev. G. Bell		3 00
" Special Donation from the Montreal Ladies' Association		100 00
		$151 22

Receipts.

Balance on hand 23rd May, 1865	$27 32
Less over credit the Rev. T. McCallum, Milton	2 50
	24 82
Congregational Collections	466 66
Donations	151 22
Balance due the Treasurer	180 99
	$823 69

Disbursements.

Paid Rev. J. E. Tanner	$90 00
" Rev. L. Baridon	315 00
" Rev. Goepp travelling expense, donation, &c.	90 49
" Rev. Goepp's salary	200 00
" Water rent	12 00
" Insurance	12 00
" Wood and coal	38 00
" Gas	14 44
" Lovell's account printing	9 00
" Interest on Mortgage	30 00
" Postage, envelopes, &c.	5 90
" Discount on silver	6 95
	$823 69

Balance brought down $180 99

ARCH. FERGUSON,

Treasurer.

Montreal, 29th May, 1866.

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